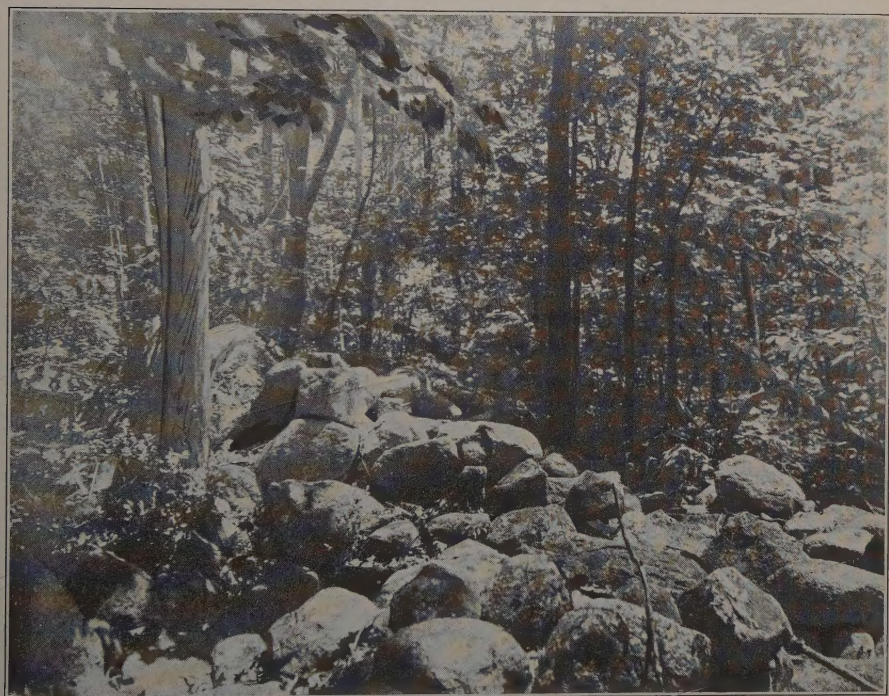


RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS

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No. 4



RUINS OF THE WALL OF QUEEN'S FORT.

Courtesy of the Providence Journal.

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ADDISON P. MUNRÔE, *President* GILBERT A. HARRINGTON, *Treasurer*
HOWARD W. PRESTON, *Secretary* HOWARD M. CHAPIN, *Librarian*

The Society assumes no responsibility for the statements or the opinions of contributors.

Queen's Fort*

About a mile and a half northwest of Wickford Junction on the North Kingstown and Exeter boundary line, three quarters of a mile south of the southern line of the Town of East Greenwich, rises precipitously a steep wooded knoll. On top of this knoll, which reaches a height of 372 feet above sea level, the highest point in North Kingstown, are the ruins of an old stone wall. Originally this rather crudely made stone wall must have stood three of four feet high, but the ravages of time, perhaps assisted by human vandalism, have to a large extent demolished the wall. Enough of the stones however remain in place, with the fallen stones heaped about them, to identify the lines

*Queen's Fort was recently presented to the Rhode Island Historical Society by Marsden J. Perry, Esq.

of the former fortifications. For this dilapidated stone wall was formerly part of the defences of a mysterious old fort whose history is now lost in the mist of antiquity.

The knoll, which arises abruptly some forty feet above the surrounding country, has an approximately level top, along the edge of which the wall is built. From the south-east the fort is protected by a natural formation, for that side of the hill is covered with huge boulders which would prevent an attack by an armed force of any size. These boulders form a natural wall for about a hundred and seventy feet. From the east end of the boulders the artificial wall extends northerly some sixty feet to what appears to have been a sort of bastion. Thence the wall extends in a northerly and westerly direction to a large clump of boulders on the north side of the hill. From the west side of these boulders the wall continues westerly and south-westerly about a hundred and twenty feet to another clump of boulders. At one point in this section the original wall seems to have been broken by an entrance, with a wall extending northward on the east side of the entrance at right angles to the main wall. From the second clump of boulders the wall continues, irregularly as regards the points of the compass, but in general southerly, to the west end of the boulders at the south part of the hill. This section of the wall is broken by two or three small clumps of boulders, by a gully, by an entrance from the west, and by one well-marked bastion and at its southern end by what may be the remains of another bastion. This bastion, as well as the other features noted, can be found clearly shown on the *Plan of Queen's Fort*, drawn in November 1865 by Mr. Henry B. Hammond for the Rhode Island Historical Society, and published on the cover of the October 1923 issue of the Society's *Collections*, and opposite page 96 of *Sachems of the Narragansetts*. Roughly speaking the fort might be said to be approximately an oval of about two hundred feet by one hundred and fifty feet.

Elisha R. Potter, the tireless antiquary of the South

County, recorded the current traditions of his day in regard to this fort and published his findings in 1835 in volume 3 of the *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections*. He states (p. 84) that this was the remains of an Indian Fort, which in 1835 was "still known by the name of *Queen's Fort*." Potter continues: "There is a hollow in the rock, which has been always known as the Queen's bedroom, and a large room, the entrance of which is nearly concealed, and which is supposed from tradition, to have been a hiding place for the Indians, and in which arrows &c. have been often found. It stands on land now owned by the Northups, formerly by the Wilkies, and is sometimes called the Wilky fort."

This reference to Queen's Fort by Potter is a footnote to his account of the march of the colonial army through "the country of the Old Squaw Queen." His account consists of a rewording of the account in an anonymous pamphlet printed in 1676, entitled *A Continuation of the State of New England, being a farther account of the Indian War*, to which he specifically refers, together with some items from Hubbard.

Hubbard, referring to the march of December 19 wrote: "Thus having waded fourteen or fifteen Mile through the Country of the old Queen, or *Sunke Squaw* of *Narhaganset*; they came at one a clock upon the Edg of the Swamp, . . ."

The anonymous author of the *Continuation*, referred to above, was somewhat confused for he gives Saturday December 19, 1675 as the date of Captain Prentice's expedition to "*the Narragansett Dwellings*" which he subsequently called "*the Narragansett Country (or Town)*." Saturday did not fall on December 19, but on December 18, which it later appears is the date intended. His account runs that they "marched towards the *Narragansett Country (or Town)* where finding no *Indians*, they were at a stand, not knowing which way to go in pursuit of the *Indians*, but however during their stay, their Capt. Pren-

tice, with his company discovered some place under ground, wherein was Indian corn laid up in store by them: this encouraged them to look further; whereupon in their search they found several good quantities of that grain in like manner, which afterwards was conveyed to the garrison." This expedition, according to the anonymous writer, took place on the Saturday before the Great Swamp Fight, so on December 18, apparently during the march of the main army from Cocumcussoc to Pettaquamscutt. If the date of the expedition is correct, it was the second trip made by Captain Prentice to the Indian village of the old Queen, for on December 14 an attack was made on this village, as is shown by the following contemporary accounts.

Joseph Dudley writing from "Mr. Smith's" on December 15, wrote,¹ "We have burned two of their Towns, viz: Ahmus who is this summer come down amongst them & the old Queens quarters consisting of about 150, many of them large, wigwams & seized & slayn 50 persons in all our prisoners being about 40".

Hubbard wrote in 1677 "Two Dayes after, Decemb. 14th, five Files of men sent out under Serjeant Bennet and another, upon the Scout, kill'd one Man and one Woman, and brought in four more by one of the Clock: the whole company marched after into some of the Sachim's Country, where they burnt an hundred and fifty Wigwams, killed seven of the Enemy, and brought in eight Prisoners, when they returned at Night."

The anonymous pamphlet, already quoted, states that "they had taken 55 Indians killed 10 more and burnt 150 wigwams, with the loss of four of our men and as many wounded. This exploit was performed by Captain *Prentice*, a Captain of the Horse".

James Oliver writing² on January 26, said "Dec. 14th,

¹Bodge, 3d Edit., p. 192.

²Bodge, 3d Edit., p. 174.

our general went out with horse and foot, I with my company was left to keep garrison. I sent out 30 of my men to scout abroad, who killed two Indians, and brought in four prisoners, one of whom was beheaded. Our army came home at night, killed 7, and brought in 9 more, young and old."

A farther Brief and True Narration of the late wars . . ., printed in London in 1676, states: "Captain *Prentice* with a Troop of Horse Scouting to discover the posture of the Enemy, discovered about 200 *Indians*, which were supposed to be the *Squaw Sachems*: these he immediately engaged with, and slew ten of them, and took about 40 Prisoners, (in which Combate only his Lieutenant was wounded) which he brought to the *English* Camp, and then found where the *Indians* had buried much Corn (as their custom is) in dry pits in Baskets."

It will be seen that the accounts of Oliver and Hubbard agree that two expeditions were sent out on December 14. Hubbard relates that one of these burned 150 wigwams which agrees with the anonymous writer and with Dudley's letter of December 15, which latter document locates definitely the 150 wigwams as at the Old Queen's village.

The exact location of the "old Queen's quarters" or "Town," the site of the 150 wigwams, cannot be identified from the meagre references that have come down to our time, but it may well have been near Queen's Fort.

The Old Queen was Matantuck, who was also variously called Quaiapen, Sunksquaw, Magnus, the Old Queene, and the Squaw Sachem.

Female chiefs were called "saunks" by the Indians, but many English writers being ignorant of that fact, thought it a proper name or part of a proper name, and hence such appellations as Snuke, Sunke and Snake, are found applied to Matantuck by the early writers.

Matantuck was an Indian princess, sister of Ninigret and Wepitamock, and daughter of one of the early Niantic sachems, possibly Sasious. Her mother was sister of Canon-

icus, the great sachem of the Narragansetts. She was probably born in the first decade of the seventeenth century and was married to her cousin Mixanno, son of Canonicus. They had two sons Kascuttup, and Quequaquenuit, and a daughter Quinimiquit.

Upon the death of Canonicus in 1647, Mixanno succeeded him as one of the two Chief Sachems of the Narragansetts and so Matantuck became a queen. Mixanno died between 1656 and 1659 leaving Matantuck a widow with three children. Her two sons, Kascuttup, often called Scuttop, Sachem of Bassokutoquage, and Quequaquenuit alias Wequaquenuit, who was called Gideon by the English, succeeded jointly to their father's inheritance of the sachemdom of the Narragansetts and henceforth for some time there were four Chief Sachems of the Narragansetts, Miantonomi's two brothers sharing the power with Mixanno's two sons. Quequaquenuit seems to have died before 1664 and Scuttop and Quinimiquit died between 1664 and 1668, leaving the rights to the sachemdom to their mother. Matantuck, now usually called Quaiapen, or the Old Queen, became one of the Chief Sachems of the Narragansetts and continued the rest of her life to share the royal power with the other Narragansett chieftains.

It seems probably that soon after their marriage, and even before the death of Canonicus in 1647, Mixanno and Matantuck took up their residence near what is now Queen's Fort. Whether they occupied a previously existing Indian village, which seems probable, or whether they founded the village, that was burned in 1675, will doubtless never be known.

Roger Williams, writing on October 9, 1650, and referring to an Indian village which was probably located at this place, said: Captain Atherton "requested me presently to travel to the Sachems, met together in mourning for Wepi-teammock's dead son within in three or four miles of my house". Williams' trading post was near Cocumcussoc and

so located within four miles of Queen's Fort. Wepitamock was brother of Matantuck, so it would be quite natural for Wepitamock's son to visit the village ruled over by his aunt and uncle.

At the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675 three envoys were sent from Boston to try to induce the Narragansetts to remain neutral in the coming struggle. The envoys reached Providence on June 22 and asked Roger Williams to assist them in their mission. Messengers were sent to the chief Narragansett sachems asking them to meet the envoys for a conference at Richard Smith's trading post at Cocumcussoc. Williams wrote of this: "They being uncivil and barbarous, and the old Queen especially timorous, we condescended to meet them all near the Great Pond, at least ten miles from Mr. Smith's home." The result of the conference was a verbal treaty of neutrality.

Philip, seeking to counteract the efforts of the English envoys sent the heads of three slain Englishmen to Pessicus as a present, but he refused to receive them. However, the Old Queen, who had no love for the English, "rewarded the bringers for their travel" to quote a contemporary writer.

Two weeks after the Great Swamp Fight, or to be exact, on January 4, two of the Narragansett sachems, presumably Canonicus and Matantuck, now usually called Quaia-pen, sent peace messengers to the English, but without success.

Towards the end of the war, the Old Queen Matantuck was still holding out with a few followers concealed somewhere in the wilderness.

On July 2, 1676 she and her followers were surprised in a swamp near Nipsachuck by an English force under Major Talcott. The English cavalrymen, assisted by their Indian allies, fell upon the Narragansetts and killed all the warriors who were defending the swamp. The victors then rushed into the swamp, killing and capturing the rest. One hundred and seventy-one Indians were killed or captured.

Among those killed in battle was the old squaw sachem, Matantuck alias Magnus.

She is described by William Harris in August 1676 as "a great woman, yea, the greatest that ther was the sd woman called the old Queene". On the other hand, Major Talcott called her "that ould peice of venum, Sucksquaw Magnus".

This fight of July 2, is often confused with the fight of July 3, in which Major Talcott defeated another band of Indians near Warwick Neck.

Potter (2d edit. p. 407) records the tradition that Queen's Island, now usually called Rabbit Island, in Wickford Harbor was one of the residences of "an old Indian Queen before the great war", that is before King Philip's War. The "Old Queen" was Matantuck of Queen's Fort.

Sidney S. Rider in his book on Indian lands (p. 242) suggests that an Indian called *Stone Wall John* was the constructor of Queen's Fort "because the contemporary English writers have said that he, and he alone, of all the Indians, could do such things; and they have described no other Indian possessed of such talent". This theory of Mr. Rider is supported by two facts; that Stone-Wall John lived in this district and that he built forts for the Indians. The anonymous author of *A New and Further Narrative of the State of New England being a continued account of the Bloody Indian War*, which was published in 1676, wrote "An arch villain of their Party, that had been with them at the sacking of Providence, famously known by the name of *Stone-Wall* or *Stone-Layer John*, for that being an active and ingenious fellow, he had learnt the Mason's Trade, and was of great use to the *Indians* in building their Forts, &c". This contemporary evidence that the Indians had stone forts is of great historical importance. Hubbard relates that on December 15 "an Indian called *Stone-Wall John*", came to Richard Smith's, pretending to come from the Sachims, intimating their Willingness to have Peace with the English" and Captain Oliver in his letter dated at

"Narragansett 26th, 11th, 1675 (that is January 26, 1675/6) wrote:³ "Dec. 15th came in John, a rogue, with pretence of peace".

STONY FORT

About six miles south of Queen's Fort near the South Kingstown line is another Indian fort, usually known by the name of Stony Fort. It, like Queen's Fort, may have been the handiwork of *Stone-Wall John*. Very little is known about Stony Fort. It was mentioned in the layout of a highway written about 1703 (Potter p. 224) and also in the deed from Anthony Low to Jeffrey Champlin dated November 30, 1685. (North Kingstown Deeds 2, 179). These Indian forts were rather citadels of refuge in case of attack, than forts built for the purpose of commanding a strategic position. In this sense these Indian forts are more analogous to the English garrison houses or block houses, than to commanding military fortifications. Queen's Fort may have been so used as a place of refuge at the time of the attack on the Queen's village of wigwams. Mr. William B. Goodwin of Hartford, an authority on Indian affairs, suggests that the bastions on Queen's Fort may have been made in imitation of the bastions on Fort Ninigret which he considers to have been built by the Dutch. The bastion was not a natural idea for the Indian, but one adopted from European civilization.

VARIOUS STORIES

Historic spots seem to have a penchant for giving rise to various vague stories and traditions, and Queen's Fort has been no exception. Sidney S. Rider (p. 243) sought to identify Queen's Fort as the fort where in 1662 an Indian

³Bodge. See ante.

Sachem, called Shumatucke, hid some horses which he stole from Thomas Minor of Southertown on the Pawcatuck River. He suggested without proof that Shumatucke or Shawattock, as he is also called, was sachem of a tribe of Indians called the Showatucks or Wunnashowattuckoogs, and that this tribe lived on the Showatucquere River near Wickford. This theory of Mr. Rider is completely refuted by Roger Williams' letters wherein (Narra. Club VI, 28, 38, et als) Williams definitely states that the Wunnashowattuckoogs were "further Neepmucks", who lived near the corner of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, far northwest of the Narragansetts, and many miles northwest of Wickford.

This theory of Rider, gave rise to a garbled story to the effect that Queen's Fort had been built by horse thieves.

The Narragansett Historical Register⁴ for 1882 contains an anonymous account of Queen's Fort in which it is called *Wilkes Fort*. The article reads: "WILKES FORT. —This used to be a halting place for the Nipmuc Indians. They and the Shore Indians usually had difficulty in the spring about the fish. They partly fortified their place, and after their day a band of outlaws added immensely to the work, and lived there in open defiance of the law a number of years. Its last inhabitant was William Reynolds, an insane man who lived at the northeast corner of the fortress for several years, and until his friends removed him to a better location. At this place there is a natural curiosity known as the "Queen's Bed Chamber". This was used by Queen Bess, the last princess who lived here. It was expected the Indians would be found during that celebrated march to the Great Swamp, in December, in Philip's time. A lot of buried corn was found and evidence that the Indians had recently been there."

Queen Bess seems to be entirely a mythical person as far

⁴Vol. I, p. 9.

as the Narragansett Indians are concerned, unless the writer of this rather untrustworthy story had Matantuck, the Old Queen, in mind.

Five years later in 1889 Cole, in his *History of Washington and Kent Counties* (p. 663) referred to the fort as "the ruins of Wilkey Fort (an old Indian fort)", and later in the same article called it *Queen's Fort*. He stated that "William Reynolds resided here some forty or fifty years". In his description of Queen's Fort, Cole wrote, "The wall runs east and west, and at either corner were once stone huts, probably the residence of some Indian chief." Cole mistook the bastions for the foundations of huts. There is no evidence that the bastions ever had roofs. In recounting its Indian history, Cole wrote: "In a small valley just west of the wall is a unique collection of stones forming a natural cavern, in which it is said Maquus, the squaw sachem, once resided, but the chamber is now nearly filled with rubbish.

"A little to the west of this once enticing retreat for the savage heroine is a sand bank where the soldiers on their celebrated march from Richard Smith's house toward the big swamp halted, expecting to find a body of Indians whom they intended to attack. But upon reaching this place the soldiers found that the Indians had returned to their fortress, leaving them only a quantity of corn, which was safely secured".

Maquus is evidently a misspelling of Magnus, which itself is thought to have been a corruption of Matantuck. The latter part of Cole's account clearly refers to the second expedition of Captain Prentice, which has already been narrated.

The natural cavern or chamber is what is usually called the Queen's bed-chamber. This Queen's bed chamber, though well known in the early part of the nineteenth century, has been lost for many years. In 1865 Mr. Hammond, on his Plan of Queen's Fort erroneously identified the east bastion as the Queen's bed-chamber and added as



ENTRANCE TO A CAVE NEAR QUEEN'S FORT.

This cave is identified by local residents as the traditional
Queen's Bed Chamber.

Courtesy of the Providence Journal

his personal opinion that the walls of this bastion or chamber were of recent construction.

Rider wrote in regard to the Queen's Chamber, as he called it: "This extraordinary chamber is not within the Fort, but outside, west, and distant perhaps a hundred feet. It consists of an open space beneath an immense mass of boulder rocks; the tallest man can stand within it; the floor is fine white sand; the entrance is so hidden that six feet away it would never be suspected; the boulders piled about it represent a thickness of fifty or sixty feet. Such is my rough description of the Queen's Chamber". The boulders over the Queen's bed chamber are shown, though not so identified, in the Hammond plan. Rider published a very rough plan of Queen's Fort which does not show the Queen's Chamber boulders.

A SERIES OF INDIAN FORTS

Queen's Fort seems to have been one of a long series of Indian forts. Six miles south of it is Stony Fort, which has already been mentioned. Three miles southwest of Stony Fort, on the east bank of the Chipuxet River, north of Larkin Pond, the remains of an Indian fort are shown on the Rhode Island Atlas of 1895. This Atlas also shows the remains of another Indian fort, some three miles to the westward, on the northwest side of the Great Swamp, just east of the Usquepaug River. There certainly was an Indian fort on the Island in the Great Swamp which served as the point of attack in the Great Swamp Fight of December 19, 1675. This fort is described as follows by the printed chronicle of 1676, "the Indians had built a kind of Fort, being Palisado's round and within that a clay Wall, as also felled down abundance of Trees to lay quite round the said Fort, but they had not quite finished the said work", and Hubbard wrote of it: "The Fort was raised upon a kind of Island of five or six Acres of rising Land in the midst of a Swamp; the sides of it were made of Palisadoes

set upright, the which was compassed about with an Hedge of almost a rod thickness”

About seven miles south of the Island in the Great Swamp lies what is called Fort Ninigret. It is a rectangular fort located on the crest of a promontory whose sharp sides descend to the waters of Ninigret Pond (formerly Charles-town Pond). The fort consists of a wall made of stones and earth, the outer covering of earth almost concealing the stones. Outside of the wall is a trough or moat. The fort is rectangular, almost square, and at three corners it has bastions. There is no bastion at the southwest corner. From the land side the fort is approached from the north over a flat plain.

This seems very probably to have been the fort mentioned by Captain John Mason in his account of the Pequot War in 1637. After telling about their landing on the shore of Narragansett Bay, Mason continued: “we marched from thence to a place called Nayanticke, it being about eighteen or twenty miles distant, where another of those Narragansett Sachems lived in a fort; it being a Frontier to the Pequots.” The distance in a direct line from Saunderstown on Narragansett Bay near where the English probably landed to Fort Ninigret is about fifteen miles, but following the Indian trails, as Mason went, the distance would be at least seventeen or eighteen miles. Mason gives the distance from this fort to the Pawcatuck River as “about twelve miles”. In a straight line the distance is about ten miles and by the Indian trails would be about twelve miles, as Mason said. This would seem to establish the existence of Fort Ninigret as early as 1637.

The fort, as laid out geometrically, clearly shows the influence of European civilization. It must have been built either by Europeans or by Indians working under direction of a European. In either case it would seem that the European influence must have been Dutch rather than English, for the bulk of the export trade of the Narragansett Indians before 1637 had been with the Dutch. Dutch

traders had been frequent visitors to the Narragansett shores. Mason applied the name *Nayanticke* to this fort and *Pessicus'* deed of 1661 locates the *Niantick* lands as east of *Weekapaug*. (R. I. H. S. C. III, 246.) Also see *Wait Winthrop's* letter, 1675, printed by Soc. of Col. Wars in R. I. 1919.

Just before Mason's expedition Roger Williams drew a rough diagrammatic representation of the district for the use of the army. The original of this diagram is lost, but a copy of it, made in 1825 locates "*Nayantaquit* where is *Wepi-teammock* and our friends" as on the west side of a river, apparently intended for the *Pawcatuck* River and between it and the river at *Mystic*. Of course in the copy the location of *Nayantaquit* may have been placed on the wrong side of the river, or it may even have been misplaced on the original sketch, for Roger Williams made the map from the reports of friendly Indians, not from personal observations. Roger Williams suggested at this time that "*Nayantaquit*, which is *Miantunnomue's* place of rendezvous, be thought on for the riding place and retiring to of vessel or vessels, which place is faithful to the *Nanhiggonticks* (*Narragansetts*) and at present enmity with the *Pequots*". This would seem to indicate *Nayantaquit* as on the *Pawcatuck* River, unless the river was intended to represent *Charlestown Inlet* and the brook at *Cross Mills*.

Potter⁵ commenting on this fort wrote: "The English evidently did not build it, for it was there very early, nor would they have taught the Indians to build it".

Writing in 1858 Samuel G. Arnold (I, 155) stated that the Dutch had two fortified trading posts on the south shore of *Narragansett*, in what is now *Charlestown*. Arnold does not locate them, but *Rider* in 1903 stated that these forts were *Fort Ninigret* and a fort at *Chemunganock*.

⁵R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll. III, 2d Edit., p. 342.

Also Cf. R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll. XIV, 1.

The remains of the fort at Chemunganock (Shumuncanuc Hill) are described as earthworks about sixty yards square, without bastions, and are located as on the land of the late George N. Crandall.⁶

Denison in 1878 confused Wepitamock with Ninigret and stated that Ninigret was in command of this fort in 1637, thus leading to the application of the name Fort Ninigret to the fort in 1883 at the dedication of the memorial boulder.

Mr. William B. Goodwin believes that Dutch traders may have built Fort Ninigret after 1627 and that it is the fort referred to in some documents which he has found in Europe.

There is the remains of another Indian fort in Rhode Island, Pomham's Fort on the west side of Warwick Neck, which was built for him by the Massachusetts Bay authorities in 1644. It has been appropriately marked by the Rhode Island Historical Society and an account of this fort appears in the January 1918 issue of the Society's *Collections*. The ruins now consist of low earthworks. It originally contained a "strong house of pallizado".

H. M. C.

⁶*The Day*, New London, Aug. 7, 1931.

Notes

The following persons have been elected to membership in the Society:

Mrs. Joshua M. Addeman	Mr. Clinton F. Stevens
Mr. William H. Peck	Mr. Charles Shepard
Mr. Edward H. West	

Mrs. Joshua M. Addeman presented to the Society a collection of manuscripts and pamphlets relating to Rhode Island gathered by her late husband, and also a blue and gray china pitcher which was found in an Indian grave at Fort Neck, Charlestown, R. I. This grave was opened in 1878 in the presence of Mr. Addeman.

In volume one of the Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts (page 17) is a document in the handwriting of William Harris, on the back of which he made the following notation: "This the copy of tht for which I was Imprisoned & tryed for my life". The original is in the Connecticut State Archives and is printed in the Rhode Island Historical Society Collections, X, 104-118.

BEQUEST

Mr. John F. Street of Pawtucket, for many years a member of the Society, died on June 29, 1931. He left a bequest of \$1,000 to the Society.

New Publications of Rhode Island Interest

Providence Illustrated Guide, a Handbook for Residents and Visitors, by John Williams Haley. Providence, 1931, 143 pages, illustrated.

Antiques for September, 1931, p. 176, contains an article on silver and latten spoons found during excavations in Rhode Island. The maker's marks on the seventeenth century spoons are described in detail.

CAPTAIN OWEN'S NARRATIVE (*Continued from p. 129*)

1767

At Providence, Captain Owen was invited to "an elegant supper and ball," where, to quote his own words, "the one and twenty girls that danced (who were from the age of fifteen to eighteen, and not one exceeding twenty years) were all so exquisitely handsome—so divinely fair, that, had they been in the Seraglio at Constantinople, the Grand-Signior would have been puzzled which he should drop the handkerchief to:— I never beheld a group of more angelic creatures—so much sweetness and elegance, blended with pure innocence and simplicity". (From *New York Public Library Bulletin* for May, 1931.)

THE GULF STREAM

About 1770, complaint was made to the London officials that the English packets which came to New York took about two weeks longer in crossing than did the Rhode Island merchant ships which put in at Narragansett Bay ports. Benjamin Franklin, being in London at the time, was consulted about the matter. To quote his own words:

"It appearing strange to me that there should be such a difference between two places, scarce a day's run asunder I could not but think the fact misunderstood or mis-

represented. There happened then to be in London a Nantucket sea captain of my acquaintance, to whom I communicated the affair. He told me he believed the fact might be true, but the difference was owing to this, that the Rhode Island captains were acquainted with the Gulf Stream, which those of the English packets were not When the winds are but light, he added, they are carried back by the current more than they are forwarded by the wind I then observed that it was a pity no notice was taken of the current upon the charts, and requested him to mark it out for me, which he readily complied with, adding directions for avoiding it in sailing from Europe to North America". (Extract from a letter from Benjamin Franklin to Alphonse le Roy of Paris. See Trans. Amer. Philos. Soc. II, 314.) From *The Gulf Stream and Its Problems* by H. A. Marmier. Smithsonian Rept. 1929, p. 286.

WEUNQUESH

That Weunquesh was living as late as April, 1685, and at that time was married, is proved by an item in the records of the Westconnaug Proprietors, a copy of which was recently presented to the Rhode Island Historical Society by Mr. Theodore G. Foster of Lansing, Michigan.

The item is the record of a charge made by John Fones for expenses: April 20, 1685 to going to Squomakuck to treat with the Indian Queen and her husband and others about the Purchase. Four days with my expences on that Journey 0.14.6. To 4 yards of Duffil given per order of the Trustees to the Indian Queen and her husband 20/1.0.0."

The Indian Queen at this time was Weunquesh. Very little, indeed, is known about her, so that every scrap of new data is of importance. The few references to her may be found in:

R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll. III, 99; and XX, 14, containing references to other articles relating to her.

Sachems of the Narragansetts, published by the R. I. Hist. Soc. 1931, pp. 91-93, 104-108 and 111.

Rider's Book Notes, XXIX, 17 and 28.

Narra. Hist. Reg. VII, 35, containing a reprint of her petition of 1680.

R. I. Col. Rec. III, 68.

Conn. Col. Rec. III, 103.

Copy of a Letter to the Stage Actors (1794)

Being informed, that you have in contemplation the acting of Plays in this Town, notwithstanding the Law of the State, and the Resolution of the Town manifesting their disapprobation thereof. We have thought best to assure you, that we cannot consistant with our Idea of good Citizenship suffer the Law of the State to be violated with Impunity, after the resolution of the Town expressly taken on the subject. And therefore take this method of requesting you, to forbear any transaction which may lay you liable to the penalty of the Law in that case made and provided. We hope you will consider this not as a threat, but a friendly caution, and assurance of our conclusion to see the Law executed after deliberate consideration on the subject.

Nicholas Brown
George Benson
Jona P. Jones
Joseph Fuller
Bazzillai Richmond
Wm. Richmond
Caleb Wheaton
Tom Hill
Edwd Thurber
Sylvanus Martin
Timothy Sheldon
Wheeler Martin
Joshua Lindsey
Aaron Wright
Sand Pitman

Charles Holden
John Pitman
Isaac Pitman
Moses Brown
Saml Thurber Jur.
Zephaniah Andrews
J. W. Coy
Saml Proud
Phineas Potter
Seth Wheaton
E Brown
Stephen Randall
Thomas Arnold
Edwd Knowles
Wm. Holroy'd

This manuscript (R. I. H. S. Ms. XVI, 145) was found in the Almy and Brown Papers among letters and accounts dated 1794. It gives us a list of those who opposed theatrical performances and attempted to block the development of the theatre in Providence.

References to the early development of the theatre in Rhode Island will be found in *An Historical Account of the Providence Stage, being a paper read before the Rhode Island Historical Society* by Charles Blake, Providence, 1860; *History of the Providence Stage* by George O. Willard, Providence, 1891; *Early College Performances of Otway in Providence* by Harold Karl Halpert in *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections*, April 1930; *The Colonial Theatre in New England*, by Professor B. W. Brown, in *Special Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society*, July 1930; Book Notes, XXIII, 142; and *Rhode Island Historical Society Publications*, 1898, VI, 141, 189 and 228.

Port of Providence Clearance Book, 1789

Communicated by

MR. T. G. FOSTER, of Lansing, Mich.

A BOOK FOR CLEARANCES of vessels, cargoes, etc. exported from the Port of Providence in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations begun on Saturday, the twentieth day of June AD 1789 from which day, Theodore Foster of said Providence was appointed Intendant of Trade for the said Port of Providence by Letter of Surrogation under his Excellency's Sign Manuel of that date.

1. A D 1789 June 20, Sloop Hancock, James Noyce Brown, master, 18 tons, 4 men, owned by James Manning & James N. Brown. Bound for New York. 23 Tons Pig Iron, 8 Hogsheads Stone Lime, 8 Barrels Sugar.

2. June 23, Sloop Ant, Daniel Bucklin, Jun. master, 22 tons, 5 men, owned by Clarke & Nightengale. Bound for State of Delaware. 4 Casks N. E. Rum 27 Bbls Ditto 3 Casks Mol--- 2 Hogsheads & 10 Casks Geneva of American Manufacture 360 yards of Tow Cloth 3m Bricks 1000# Flax 300# Cheese 50# Bokea Tea 5 Firkins of Butter Invoice of Iron & Crockery Ware 2 Doz Pair Cotton Cards 6t of Cod fish 6 Boxes Chocolate 12 Pairs of Men's Leather Shoes 1 doz. Women's Shoes 2½ Doz Felt Hats 2 Saddles 2 Doz Pails 1 Barrel Fish Oil 1 Barrel of Gurry.
3. June 24, Sloop Joanna, Micheal Anthony, Master, 15 tons, 3 men, for New York. 10 Hogsheads of Molasses 8 Do Stone Lime 5 Casks Nails 2 Ditto Salt 12 Bundles Papers 3 Ditto Leather 2 Barrels Pickled Codfish 34# Indigo 1 Cask Sugar A Quantity of Country Produce Some Household Furniture 2 Doz Iron Shovels.
4. June 26, Schooner Sally, Joseph Rhodes, master, 60 tons, 5 men, for Virginia. 60 Hogsheads of Lime.
5. June 26, Sloop Barnstable Packet, David Scudder, master, 25 tons, 3 men, for Barnstable. 45t Cotton 10 Barrels Salt 10 m Nails 16t Sugar 10m Shingles 1m Boards.
6. June 27, Sloop Lively, Isaac Manchester, master, 25 tons, 5 men, for Virginia. 3 Hogsheads of Molasses 6 Hhs and 3 Barrls Rum and 80 Bushels of Salt
7. June 27, Sloop Packet, Payne Elwell, master, 39 tons, 4 men, for North Yarmouth. 1 Cask Rice 1 Cask Tobacco 1 Chest Tea 200 t Loose Tea 100t Coffee 2 Barrels Sugar 300t Cotton 1 Barrel New England Rum
8. June 29, Sloop Lark Sydney, John Tillinghast, master, 60 tons, 6 men for Virginia. 50 Hogsheads of Stone Lime 3 Hhs Sugar 15 Bbl Ditto

9. June 30, Sloop Betsey, Nathan W. Jackson, master, 30 tons, 5 men, for Alexandria. 60 Hogsheads Stone Lime 25 Kegs Salmon 30 Barrels Herring 5 Barrels Beef 250 Yards Tow Cloth 24 Yards Shirting Checks 7 Boxes Chocolate 2 of Cod fish 324# Flax 2 Barrels Potatoes 100# Sole Leather 5 Dozen Walking Sticks 8 Boxes Spermaceti Candles 3 Ferkins of Butter 10 Barrels of Pork 40 Pair Womens Cloth Shoes 30 Pair Mens Leather Shoes 6 Hundred Weight of Cheese 8 Bbls Cyder 3 Boxes Tallow Candles 4 Barrels of Mackerel 2 Reams Wrapping Paper 7 Reams Writing Paper
The above being the Produce & Manufacture of the State—2 Barrels of New England Rum 3 Barrels of Sugar.
10. July 1, Schooner Dean, William Bullock, master, 30 tons, 5 men, 1 Hogshead of Molasses 1 Barrel Sugar 1 Barrel N. E. Rum 2 Barrels of Pork 12 Ditto Flour—Bread 50 Bushels of Salt 20 Pair Mens Shoes 100 Yards of Tow and Flannel Cloth.
11. July 1, Schooner Sally, Joseph Merrick, master, 37 tons, 3 men, for Bay of Fundy. 27 Barrels of Salt 5 Barrels of Flour 60 Sheep with Hay Stores, etc.

Data relating to early Rhode Island shipping will be found in *The Letter Book of Peleg Sanford* and *The Letter Book of James Browne*, both of which were published by the Rhode Island Historical Society; in *Commerce of Rhode Island* which are volumes 69 and 70 of the Massachusetts Historical Society Collections; and in the *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections* XIV, 99 and 125; XVI, 84; XXIII, 76 and XXIV, 73.

Captain John Rous, R. N.

John Rous, who is regarded by many as the ablest American naval commander of the colonial period, has generally been considered a Massachusetts man, but the Rous family papers, recently presented to the Society by Captain G. Andrews Moriarty, Jr., F. S. A., prove that for many years Rous was a resident of Newport, Rhode Island, and that his chief connection with Massachusetts was that he commanded vessels owned in Massachusetts.

John Rous, or Rousse as the name was originally spelled, was born at St. Pierre Port in the Island of Guernsey on January 28, 1699, and was baptized on the eighth of February. He was the son of Captain Denis Rousse and his wife, Sarah Turner.

A copy of the baptismal record, made on parchment in 1717, preserves the quaint old French of the record of the baptism, as it was entered in the parish records of the little Channel Island church:

"Extrait des Registres des Baptêmes administrez En la Paroisse de St Pierre Port en L'Isle de Guernsey

"Jean fils du Capitaine Denis Rousse et de Sara Turner sa feme dont Les Srs Jean et Robert Renouf ont esté pareins et Dlle Marie Renouf mareine, Le dit Jean né Le Jeudy 28^e de Janvier 1699-1700 et battizé Le Jeudy 8^e de Feuburier en suivant".

John's father, Denis Rousse, was a captain, presumably a sea captain, and as the Channel Islands have for centuries been famous for the mariners which they have produced, it is not surprising that John took to the sea and followed the profession of his father, from whom he doubtless acquired his nautical training as well as his love of the sea.

As might be expected, we have no records of his childhood and youth, but we may picture him as playing around the harbor of St. Pierre, rowing and sailing small boats and

watching and visiting the larger sea-going vessels that sailed from this port.

He followed the sea, and the next record we have of him is after he had crossed the Atlantic Ocean.

John Rous appeared in Newport as early as 1725, where on January 2 he was married to Jean Rucketts. In the record of Trinity Church his name is spelled Rouse and her name is given as Jean, doubtless an attempt to spell Jeanne. As Rucketts is not a Newport name, and as both her given and family name have a certain French suggestion, it seems quite possible that she may have been a Channel Island girl, perhaps a childhood friend and playmate of John Rous. They had at least two children, Jane and Sarah, named for the mother and grandmother respectively.

John Rous seems to have been an apt pupil in his father's profession. As might be expected, records of him in the twenties and thirties are hard to find. Yet we may be sure that he rose gradually in his chosen vocation of merchant marine sailor and underwent the rough training and hazardous experiences of the early eighteenth century mariners. The hot weather of the tropics, the biting cold of the North Atlantic winter, storms, unseaworthy crafts, bad food, and doubtless occasional shortages of food and water, fell to his lot as to most of the seamen of the period.

The next record of him appears to be the following receipt:

"November the 6th 1734 Recd of John Rouse Master of the Sloop Speedwell twelve pounds seven shillings 8 d for three months & five days for wages due to me for a voyage to New foundland

Elisha Rydon"

Rous spent some time as master of vessels in the West Indies trade, and in 1742 gave the following testimony in regard to the common practice of changing the names of vessels in order that the names might conform to the ship's papers.

He deposed, "Years ago I was in Curacao and had a sea brief limited for six months and during that time I was master of three different vessels and used the same sea brief for them all, calling them successively by the same name. The vessels above mentioned were of the burthen of about eight, nine and twelve tons, the two first of which vessels belonged to Dutchmen, as I understood, and the other was owned by a Frenchman as I took it and was hired by the above Dutchman and afterwards, I believe, was returned to the Frenchmen again. They all sailed from Curacao to the Island of Canco and back again to Curacao."

Upon the outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear in 1739, John Jones of Boston, who later in the year was associated in a privateering venture with George Wanton of Newport, fitted out the privateer *Young Eagle*, a bilander of 100 tons, carrying 12 carriage guns and 18 swivel guns. The command of this vessel was given to Capt. Philip Dumaresq, who received his commission on August 24. John Rous signed up as first lieutenant. Why Rous shipped on the *Young Eagle* is not definitely known, for he may have been drawn to this ship for two very different reasons. Rous was a Newport skipper and so must have been acquainted with George Wanton, one of Newport's leading shipowners, and indeed he may have previously sailed in command of some of Wanton's vessels. It is quite possible, therefore, that it may have been through Wanton and Jones that Rous became interested in this venture. On the other hand, both Rous and Dumaresq were natives of the Channel Island and this may have been the bond that drew them together and that induced Rous to turn from the merchant marine to privateering.

Rous' entrance into naval service, or what perhaps, strictly speaking, should more properly be called privateering, was almost immediately encompassed in the excitement of an incipient mutiny, an omen or harbinger of what privateering was to mean to him.

A detailed account of Rous' service on the privateer

Young Eagle, and his capture of the Amsterdam Post, will be found in Chapin's *Privateering in King George's War* (pages 7-12).

In February, 1739-40, Captain Dumaresq ordered Lieutenant Rous to take the prize sloop *Beginning* to Gibraltar, so Rous, with a prize crew of ten men, sailed from Madeira. D'wize, one of this prize crew, said that he overheard Rous, Gabrielshundh and Hall plot to scuttle the ship rather than go to Gibraltar, and there were rumors on foot that there was a plot to run away with the *Young Eagle*. Rous was reported to have said that they would all be hanged at Cadiz if taken by the Spaniards, because goods had been taken out of uncondemned prizes. Some of the reports may have been exaggerated by ex-parte accounts, but be that as it may, Rous and the prize returned to Madeira the next day. At some point in the excitement, Rous kicked chief mate Loud in the face, and it was further reported that Rous, when lieutenant in command of the *Young Eagle*, said he "would stretch his commission as far as it would go, but New England should never have the honour of seeing him hanged." Rous was imprisoned at Madeira for nine days, and then on March 6, 1739/40, released to enlist as master's mate on *H. M. S. Ruby*, on which he served until April 21, 1740. The naval officers and others testified to Rous' good behavior, and stated that Captain Dumaresq confronted him with no serious charges. Joseph Rous, his brother, also served on the *Ruby* at this time. Some two years later, when Rous became captain of the *Young Eagle* and was beating up for volunteers in Boston, a complaint was entered that Loud followed the drummer in a riotous manner, cursing and abusing Rous.

John Rous returned to America and again took up the profession of a captain in the merchant marine. He commanded the sloop *Sarah*, which sailed from Newport on July 28, 1740. bound for Maryland.

Rous doubtless had no more trouble on his various sea voyages than usually fell to the lot of the average mariner,

but, owing to the fact that several depositions have been preserved, we are able to get a few intimate side-lights on his personality and experiences.

“The Examination of Thomas Birt Aged aboute twenty years being first Sworn on the holy Evengels of almighty God Deposeth and Saith that aboute the 28th day of July anno Dom. 1740. he this Deponant Sailed from Rhode Island with Capt. John Rouse in his Sloop called the Sarah, Togeather with Severall others Belonging to the Said Vessell, Particularly a Certain Trustom Coffin whome this Deponant Understood was Shipt Mate of the Said Sloop and bound for Maryland, and that on the Fryday following the Said Thrustom Coffin went up to the Maste head of Said Vessell and Stay’d theire aboute halph an hour, and when he came Down upon Deck, he said Coffin Used Severall words in this Mannor throwing his hatt down upon the Said Deck, Saying Capt. Rouse there is two Spanards Seeing two Sloops, to wind ward and that he should be Master of the Smallest of them, and that they Should go into the Capes Togeather Meaning the Capes of Virginia and aboute two days after, this Deponent arrived within the Said Capes, the said Coffin Saw a Small Tobacco Sloop, where upon the Said Coffin Said that Sloop was a whailer whereupon Capt. John Rouse Replyed and told the said Coffin that it was no such thing and that he was a Blockhead in Saying so and Said it was a Tobacco Droger, which the said Coffin Insisted and Said it was a Whailor, Showing the Said Rouse how the Boate which was at the Starne of the Said Tobacco Sloop had its Motion Like a whailor, then the Said Capt Rouse ordered the Said Coffin to go into the hole of the Said Sloop which the Said Coffin Refused, and the Said Rouse thereup took up a pump brake threatning him that he would Strick him, but this Deponant Declareth that the Said Rouse Never Strock the Said Coffin with Said pump brake but Laid it down againe, where upon the Said Capt Rouse Insisted to Secure him, that the said Coffin should not do any Damage, Raveing Like a madman, and

that amediatly Stript of his Cloaths and Strock the said Capt. Rouse Severall Times, whereupon the said Capt. Rouse and a Certaine Benjamin Rickels also Edward Caine, assisted in Securing the Said Coffin and Tyed his hands behind him and put him into the hole of Said Vessell, being Tyed with the Lead Line, he the said Coffin Complaining that the Line hurt him whereupon Capt. Rouse ordered a point to be got to pinion him and Accordingly the said Rouse tyed the Said Coffin with the said point then the Said Coffin Replyed he could not go down into the hole of Said Vessel the said Rouse told him he would assist him down in the hole, and accordingly went down to assist him, he the said Coffin Refused to have any assitance from the Said Rouse, but took hold of a Rope and went down thereby and Stood in the hole of Said Vessell, and the Said Coffin Uesed Strange Surprizeng words, More Like a mad man then a man in his Sence's Saying the Lord have Mercy upon us, John Rouse wants to take my Life, but Blood for Blood and Life for Life I will have Revenge If I Live, being at an anchor in the Said Bay at New point Comfort this Deponant Declareth that the Said Capt. Rouse Said, wee want fresh provisions, wee will go ashore and git Som whereupon the Boate was hoisted from on board the said Sloop and the Said Capt. Rouse Togeather with Benjamin Rickels and Edward Caine went a Shore, Leaving the Said Trustom Coffin, and this Deponant on Board of the Said Sloop, when the Said Capt. Rouse with his two men afd had got a Considerable Distance from the said Sloop in ord. to go a Shore, the said Trustom Coffin Called to Thomas Birt this Depo- nant that he was Hungry whereupon this Deponant Car- ried him Some Vickles, the Said Coffin Jumpt upon the said Deck Saying Soha. this Deponant askt him the said Coffin what he was agoing to do, he Replyed he was going to Swim on Board of yonder Sloop which was aboute a mile & a halph from the Said Vessell the Deponant was onboard of Calling the said Sloop a Whailor, which this Deponant took to be a Tobacco Droger whereupon this

Depont went into the Cabbin and got one of the Collors of Said Sloop, to make a Signall that Capt. Rouse might see, that he might Returne to the said Sloop and Secure the said Coffin, but seeing of it, the said Capt. Rouse told this Depont when he came on board, that he thought it was Cloaths hung up to Drye and did not then Returne, then the said Coffin went over the Side of the Said Vessell and Hung by his hands at the Chains, to feele whether the water was Cold, whereupon he told this Deponant that the water was Cold, and came on board Againe, and put on him a thick pair of Britches, and a Brown Holland Jacket and a Straw hatt, with a pair of Silver Shoe Buckles and knee Buckles tyed with a String Round his Neck with out any Shoos or Stockins or Cap. then went upon the Quarter Deck and got a knife awhestone and wheted his knife a Considerable time, telling this Deponant that if he Hoisted the Jack or Collers any more and that the Boate came on Board, that he would amediatly go on Board the Sloop, this Deponant Replyed to the said Coffin that if he should go from on Board, that he this Deponant should be Blaimes, whereupon the said Coffin Replyed that there was no Danger and that he should have no Blame come to him Still this Deponant using many prevailing words that he might not go, feareing that he would be drowned, then the said Coffin took up a wescoat from the Quarter Deck, and took out of the pocket, a pocket Book and takeing out of the said Book two peices of paper, telling this Deponant they ware Each of them three pound Notes, which this Deponant does not know that they were so. then the said Coffin Laid down the saide wescoate on the winless of the said Vessell puting his pocket Book in his wescoate againe then taking the key out of his Chest put it in his Britches pocket which he had on, then this Deponant went into the Cabbin, Leaving the said Coffin up on Deck, the said Coffin Called to this Deponant asking him if he would not See him go overboard, this Deponant Replying no, and Looking out at the Cabbin door upon Deck and not Seeing the said Coffin, amagined he was gone, whereupon

this Deponant went upon Deck and Looking over the side of the said Vessell, Saw the Said Coffin in the water Swimming, being Dusk or Late in the Evening, Could Scarce See him, but thought he was Endeavouring to Swim towards the afd Sloop wth the Said Coffin threatned to Swim on board before, and amediatly Saw no more of the Said Coffin Soon after this Deponant Saith that Capt. Jno. Rouse Came on board with his boate, and men as aforsd where he brought a Lamb with him, this Deponant further Declareth that when the said Coffin was Swimming away in the water the said Coffin called to this Deponant and Bed him far well but this Deponant made no answer, and further Saith not.
Thomas Burt

"Sworne to before me the Subscriber one of his Lordship Justices of the peace for Talbot County this 4th day of october ano Dom. 1740,

RISDENBOSMAN"

As an aftermath of the Tristom Coffin affair there is the following order, dated: "Nantucket July the 28th 1741. frind rouse be pleas to deliver my sons chist & beding to Benjamin Chase & he will pay the balance & his receart shall be your discharg

PETER COFFIN".

On the reverse is Benj. Chase's receipt.

Rous' love of adventure had been aroused by this privateering experience and he could not for long resist the lure of going "a-privateering." He soon accepted a commission as captain of the *Speedwell*, a privateer sloop of 80 tons which was owned by John Jones of Boston and George Wanton of Newport. It will be remembered that Jones owned the privateer *Young Eagle*, on which Rous had served as first lieutenant. The *Speedwell* was armed with eight carriage guns and fourteen swivels, and carried a crew of 80 or 90 men. Early in October, Rous beat up for volunteers, and, having signed up enough hands, sailed on



THE STEAMBOAT PROVIDENCE

*From a painting in the Richard W. Comstock, Jr.,
Memorial Collection in the Society's Museum.*

October 13, 1740. He laid his course southeastward and planned to cruise in the same waters that were already familiar to him, thanks to his service on the *Young Eagle*.*

Captain Rous began to speculate in privateer shares as early as 1741, as is shown by a receipt:

"September the 21, 1741 Recev'd of Capt. John Rousse the sum of one hundred and thirty pound being for a shear belonging to my son of the duch prize brot in by Capt. bayod I say Receved by me

JOB CASWELL"

On July 20 he bought of James Russell, "one of Capt. Wimble's Company," for 100 old tenor one "whole Share Right & Proportion of the ship Angola her Cargo and Appurtenances brought into this Port of Newport aforesaid by the two Privateers Commanded by Capt. James Allen & Capt. James Wimble".

On July 23 he bought of James Russell, who described himself as "one of the Company of the Private Mann of Warr Sloop called the Revenge Commanded by Capt. James Wimble," for £15 current money of the colony one "whole share Right & Proportion of all the Prizes, Prize Goods & every thing else taken by Sd Private Man of Warr & Company & brought into Newport aforsd & Carried into New Providence".

Rous sailed in command of the *Young Eagle* on December 19, 1741, on a privateering cruise. An account of his exploits while commander of this privateer will be found in *Privateering in King George's War* (pages 18-29).

In the Louisbourg expedition of 1745, Rous was given the command of the snow Shirley, a galley of 24 guns, named in honor of Governor William Shirley. He sailed from King's Roads, as Nantasket was then called, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon on Sunday, March 24, 1745, con-

*For an account of this cruise, see *Privateering in King George's War* (pages 33-36).

voying the fleet of 51 transports and armed sloops. George Whitefield, the evangelist, gave the expedition somewhat the aspect of a crusade, by suggesting as a motto for their flag: *Nil desperandum Christo duce*, which flag presumably was flown from the Shirley. The fleet touched at Sheepscot, and awaited the second detachment, which sailed from Boston on the 26th. Three days later, the entire fleet, consisting of 63 sail, weighed anchors and sailed for Cape Breton. As might be expected at this season of the year, the fleet was scattered by the bad weather that was encountered on the voyage. A northeast storm raged all day on March 30, and the Shirley, with twenty vessels that had succeeded in keeping together, arrived at Canso on April 4. The French frigate Renommée was sighted off Canso on April 18, and the Shirley, accompanied by the sloop Massachusetts and the sloop Abigail, went in chase. On the next day, the Shirley, Captain Rous, took an important part in the battle with the Renommée, firing 115 shots at her during the engagement. The Shirley returned to Canso on the 21st, and General Pepperell made his headquarters on board of her until the 26th, when, in company with the Tartar, the Shirley again went in pursuit of the Renommée. They overtook the French vessel to the west of George's Banks and attacked her, but she, being a better sailer, easily escaped the Shirley. The latter continued westward and reached Nantasket on May 2. She sailed again in a day or two, convoying five transports, and on this voyage again fell in with the Renommée, which attacked one of the transports and forced her to strike her colors. The Renommée then left her to chase the Shirley, thus enabling the captured vessel to escape. The Shirley outsailed the Renommée this time, and reached Canso in safety. She sailed from Canso on the 15th, convoying her charges, and arrived at Chapeaurouge Bay the next day.

The Shirley, Captain Rous, joined in the chase of the ship Vigilant, 64 guns, Capt. Alexandre Boisdecourt, Marquis de la Maisonfort, at 3 o'clock on the afternoon of

May 19, and "plied her bow chasers very well" from 6 to 7 o'clock in the evening, when the *Vigilant* outdistanced her. The *Shirley* sailed for Annapolis June 2, convoying two schooners, and at Annapolis received orders to proceed to Boston. She again arrived off Louisbourg with artillery about June 25.

The *Shirley*, Captain Rous, sailed on July 6 amid the salutes of the men-of-war with despatches for England, where she arrived after a voyage of three weeks. She crossed the Atlantic in four weeks on her return voyage, and arrived at Louisbourg on September 24, bringing news of Commodore Warren's promotion to the rank of Rear Admiral. She fired fifteen guns and H. M. S. *Superb* answered with thirteen guns.

Maclay tells us that after the *Shirley*, Captain Rous, had completed her work in connection with the Louisbourg expedition, "she separated from her consorts and captured eight French vessels, two of which made a determined resistance. For this service Captain Rous received a captain's commission in the King's service." The *Boston News-Letter*, for October 10, states that Commodore Warren had by that time received orders to buy the *Shirley*, and to issue a captain's commission in the Royal Navy to Captain Rous. The *Shirley* was driven ashore in a gale at Annapolis Royal in 1746, but was floated.

John Charnock, in his *Biographia Navalis* (London, 1797, Volume V, page 412) gives the following account of Captain John Rous:

"John Rous. This gentleman was by birth an American; and having risen to the rank of lieutenant in the navy, quitted for a time his majesty's service and took the command of a private ship of war fitted out from New England. We have not been able to collect any subsequent information concerning him, except that having distinguished himself in this occupation so highly, as to attract the notice of sir Peter Warren, who in 1745, was commodore of the armament sent against Louisbourg; he was by him pro-

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PROVIDENCE